THE SCHOOLS OF THE PEOPLE

Demoralizing Effect of School Politics Illustrated in Philadelphia.

HOW CHILDREN'S EYES ARE INJURED

Startling Result of Investigations Pursued by a Yale Professor-School Books and Young Eyes-Various Educational Notes.

Philadelphia is no exception from the universal American complaint of too much politics in the management of the public schools. The evil has reached an scute stage in the Quaker City, and efforts are being made to provide a remedy through legislative enactment. But the friends of reform are met at the doors of the state legislature with the malign and demoralizing influences which dominate in the schools, and which threaten to block all remedial measures. Concerning this influence the Philadelphia

"The educational bill now being considered by the legislature is opposed in this city by some of the school boards and a certain class of small fry politicians. On the other hand, the mass of the citizens, who have looked into the matter, are almost a unit in favor of the measure, and with them in its support is the mayor and every daily newspaper. Even a few of the school boards, it is understood, agree that the educational bill, abolishing ward lines and placing the schools under the direct care of the hoard of education, assisted by local boards of visitors, in far better than the present antiquated, cumbersome and inefficient system. Those who oppose the bill do so, as a rule, from

who oppose the bill do so, as a rule, from purely solfish matives. They care nothing for the betterment of the schools, the thorough education of the children, or for the best good to the whole city. To the petty politician and some school directors, local boards are but a means to personal ends, ends which can be best served by keeping the school districts identical with the ward lines. To this class of persons to be a director means that he, or the petty politicians causing his nomination, shall have the appointment of an indefinite number of teachers and janitors. There is one board in this city the members of which recently indicity the members of which recently indi-cated great satisfaction over the near completion of a new school house, because, as they expressed it, they would have five new appointments, namely, four teachers and a junitor. There was not even a thought utjanitor. There was not even a thought ut-tered of the gratifying prospect of having four new divisions, except that there would be places for four persons, through whom, directly or indirectly, they expected to gain some petry political advantage in the ward.
"There is no doubt that there are school boards in Philadelphia of whose members

the majority are earnest, intelligent men, actuated by a desire to further the best in-terests of the schools and city, and to promote the welfare of the children. There are also as certainly good, true men in every school board, but it is just as certain that the boards having a majority of such men are in a minority, and it is just as true that, in other cases, the good men are so few in number as to be practically helpless to do good in school work.

"This wretched condition of affairs is known to nearly every parent in Philadelphia whose children attend the public schools, and they are therefore almost unanimous in a desire to see the bill urged by the Civic club adopted by the legislature and made a

HOW CHILDREN'S EYES ARE INJURED. Prof. E. W. Scripture of the psychological department of Yale university has been in-vestigating a subject that will interest every parent in the land who has a child in the schools. Some time ago it occurred to him that it would be a good plan to find out why there was so much shortsightedness in the children who are attending the public schools, and other schools for that matter, and the result of that line of investigation will be something of a revelation to the fathers and mothers in this country who have in the various institutions of In a word, Prof. Scripture declares that out of every 100 cases of shortsightedness more than ninety cases are the result of school work. A representative of the New York Times called on Prof. Scripture recently, and in answer to a number of ques-tions on this subject the professor said:

"Spectacle dealers are very serviceable to imanity, yet I propose that the parents humanity, yet I propose that the parents and teachers of the land join in a benevolent boycott to drive them out of business. I don't mean to boycott the dealers directly. but to boycott the bad eyes by which we give them trade.

"Do you know why you wear glasses for shortsightedness? Did it ever occur to you that somebody is to blame for all the shortsightedness in this world? It seems a strange and almost incredible statement that, with a few very rare exceptions, all the shortsightedness in the world has been manufactured by man himself, yet this is the Manufactured! Yes, manufactured by those who had charge of our childhood's days. Our parents, our teachers, our guar-dians, and our playmates are the persons to whom we owe the irreparable injury of the beautiful eyes that God gives us all. Man-ufactured! Yes, manufactured by our early sports, by our early lessons at home, by the occupations of the kindergarten, by viciou

school books, and so on.

"I have a couple of children for whose education I must begin to provide; they need and must have something to do; they must books and toys and school. In a short time the school days must begin. But can I, as a father, send them to the schools for which we pay so much, when I know the chances of ruined eyes? Can I trust them to teachers who will oblige them to use bad books—yes, 'bad' books, for a book that ruins the eyes is just as bad as a book that corrupts the morals. Who is to blame for this difficulty? Not the publisher; he makes books to sell, and will make whatever the school authorities will buy. Not the boards of education; they are busy men of the world, and, of course, have no knowledge of the safe requirements for the eyes. superintendents, principals and teachers; they have had no instruction on the subject and know no better. Are the normal schools and training schools to blame? They are teach all things necessary school work, but they are apparently ig-norant on this as well as many other sub-

What is the cause of shortsightedness? It is the amount of work near the eyes which we do during early life, and this is mainly school work. The child's eye is very lengthen, and it does not recover

from this lengthening.
"I cannot on this occasion discuss the extensive and careful investigations which prove that shortsightedness is due to school work. The results make it thoroughly safe Development in the Science of Astrology and reliable to say that out of every 100 cases of shortsightedness more than ninety cases are the result of school work. I also cannot relate the great disadvantages of shortsightedness and the evils that follow upon it; the oculists and physicians can tell are constantly being discovered, while the story better than I can. Moreover, I will pass over for the present certain crimes of the dust of the dark ages, is once more the kindergarten, although when I think of the little eyes now being ruined all over the country I can hardly justify my conscience in derous wheel of the engine now turns thou-

your child uses in school. Now, I will give you the measurements for the worst book to be allowed in any school. If you have one of the ordinary steel measures used by mechanics you can make all measurements yourself; I mean the steel rule that is marked in sixty-fourths of an inch. Requirements to be met: Height of smallest 'n.' at least 1-16 inch; thickness of line in 'n.' at least so few are interested in the science and 1-100 inch; distance betwen letters, at least S-100 inch; space between lines, at least 1-10 inch; length of line, at most 4 inches.

ch were trying even to my own eyes.

out with fearfully fine-lined italics, type not helf big enough for the little eyes. An ele-mentary arithmetic, the same one I had when a schoolboy; best type in the book just comes up to the least requirements for the worst books in the highest grades; more than half the book is in smaller type and as for the minutely-printed portions and the complicated fractions—heaven preserve our eyes! And as on; worse and worse they grow. Compare especially your children's geographies with the specimen. Shortsightedness—it is the blackwall. the blackmall we pay to careios, the sake and ignorant school authorities for the sake NOTED WOMAN ASTRONOMER.

Mrs. Maria Fleming, who is in charge of the astronomical observatory of Harvard, has a good record as an astronomer. In 1890 she was able to annuince from a spectrum that a certain star in the Constellation Cygnus was variable, and during the next year and was variable, and during the next year and a half she discovered eleven new variables, besides suspecting forty others. She also has the bonor of having first discovered planetary nebula by the aid of photography, and in 1892 she discovered Nova Normae. "In "The Observatory," says the Boston Globe, "the regular publication of the Greenwich (England) observatory, Mrs. Fleming has received very cordial recognition for her zeal, skill and hard work, and has been called zeal, skii and hard work, and has been called, moreover, a 'brilliant discoverer.' The brief reports of various phases of the Draper memorial work have appeared for years in the 'Astronomischen Nachtichten' and other astronomical journals, over the signature of M. Pieming, and her name is well known to scientific men in this country and Europe Miss Manry, Miss Leland and several others of the ladies associated with Mrs. Fleming have been engaged in important pieces of investigation. Miss Bruce's gift of a \$50,000 telescope, to be used in the Draper memorial work at Peru, will make it possible to photo-graph stars of the smallest magnitude. The interior of the Draper memorial building at Cambridge is very attractive to the eye. The rooms are large and light and pleasant and, of course, spotlessly neat. The walls are hung with beautiful photographs of the stars and other heavenly objects, and of views of the different stations of the Harvard observatory. There are good rugs on the floor and large library tables and well filled bookcases in the different rooms for the con-venience of the workers, with here and there magnifying glasses and other optical instruments that show what kind of work carried on there. In one room all the phot graph plates are stowed away for reference in large, convenient cases—like a library of glass books. Over all Mrs. Fleming presides

with a word of welcome for the visitor really interested in scientific work." PENNSYLVANIA UNIVERSITY. It is now 140 years since what had been at academy was incorporated as the College o Philadelphia, which, thirty-six years later, became the University of Pennsylvania. The catalogue for 1894-95 bears witness to the remarkable prosperity and usefulness which this institution has attained. It includes no divinity school, but all the other departments comprehended in universities of the highest grade are represented, and grea pains are taken to assure a large measure of significance and value to each of its various diplomas. The University of Pennsylvania was one of the first, if not the very first, in this country to insist on four years of study in its medical school, and it stands firmly by the side of Yate in requiring a knowledge of Greek as well as Latin as a condition of an A.B. degree. In point of size this institution ranks among the largest

of American universities. The professors lecturers and instructors number 273, and lecturers and instructors number 273, and there are 2,398 students, of whom 754 are credited to the college proper and \$15 to the medical department, which is the oldest school of the kind in the United States, and has always maintained a relatively reputation for efficiency. EDUCATIONAL NOTES.

Prof. Edward Everett Hale, jr., son of the author and preacher, has resigned the chair of English in the University of Iowa, and will go to Union college, Schenectady, N. Y. Prof. C. D. Jameson of the chair of civil cr gineering has also resigned, to practice his profession In Oakland, Cal., the teacher may request

the school board to take off 1 per cent of his salary for the pension fund, and then, when he has taught twenty years, and is incapaci-tated, may receive \$45 per month.

The twenty-fifth annual oratorical contest for the \$100 prize that Cornell university offers through the generosity of General Stewart L. Woodford, formerly lieutenant governor of New York, was held May 3 and was won by one of Cornell's famous athletes, George Palmer Dyer, of Washington, D. C., whose oration was on the subject of "Edu-

American in Germany was surprised o find a number of cripples among the celebrated college professors, men whose high standard of learning makes them famous the world over. One Berlin professor is wheeled into his lecture room every day, and there are others similarly though for the most part less painfully afflicted. This is due partly to the fact that under the military regime of Germany when a boy is disqualified for the army he is trained for science or the law. The registration of the University of Michigan, as it will appear in the forthcoming

annual calendar, is 2,815, the largest of any year. Of this number, 1,514 are literary students, 374 medical, 648 laws, 77 pharmacy 185 dental and 17 homeopathic. Of the total number, 1,545 are from Michigan and pay \$46,850 of the \$107,030 fees, and the 1,270 from other states pay \$60.388. The senior law class numbers 307, and the senior literary

seph Jefferson has been engaged by Yale college for a series of lectures at that uniersity on dramatic art.

Last year the New York legislature appro priated \$8,000 for investigation and experi ments in the sixteen western counties of the state by the Department of Horticulture at Cornell university. The results of the ex-penditure were so beneficial to fruit growers and farmers that these interests demanded a larger appropriation this year and the legis-lature accordingly voted \$15,000-double the amount appropriated in 1894.

The cause of education has been given ma

erial assistance through the munificent gift f Anna T. Jeanes to the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends of \$200,000. Specifically the money is to be devoted to "educational purposes, to libraries and the encouragement of literature on subjects moral, scientific and ruthful, and to the support of schools unde the care of the monthly meetings of Friends beyond the limits of Philadelphia."

The coming session of the Cornell summer

school bids fair to be the most successful one Beginning in 1892, the sum mer school has grown rapidly, both as re gards the number of students in attendance and the number of courses offered. This year eighty-four courses are offered, which will be given without regard to the number of students registering. The faculty con sists of fourteen professors and seventeen instructors. The school is open to women as well as to men, and the same facilities for work are extended to its students as to regular students of the university, who in fac may receive credit for work done in the summer school up to a certain limit.

Development in the Science of Astrology Recounted. No era in the history of our planet has been more distinguished for investigating the occult in nature than the present. New forces intelligence of the past, long buried beneath beaming from the altar of science. The ponkeeping still. All small objects and fine work must be held near the eyes, in order to be seen. Consequently all fine work is a direct inducement to short-sightedness.
"But the books in the school—are they dangerous? I will let each parent answer the question himself. Get together the books and heels. Psychic research has discovered a sixth sense, and millions are in-

among the foremost, yet it is remarkable that so few are interested in the science and philosophy of the celestial orbs. Is there pro-portion in the universe? Ask Jupiter, with his moons, and Saturn with his far off cloudy "I picked up a few school books the other fay. Among them was a primer; type fairly good for little children, but under the different exercises were lines in thin Italics, which were lines in thin Italics, in the time tables of the unseen celestial rail-ways, and though the orbs go thundering which were trying even to my own eyes. In the time tables of the unseen celestial railtalics should be absolutely forbidden to children under 10 years of age anyway. Should
not the conaclence of the lady author trouble
her for the eyes she has ruined? A beginher for the eyes she has ruined? A beginher reading book; the very first lesson starts
with the fragments of their ruins. Even the

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comet, the mail carrier from one system of worlds to another, as he drives by torchlight across the abyss of space profound, coming up to each goal with a curve, bending the necks of his fiery coursers in a graceful, necks of his fiery coursers in a graceful, wisdom laid down a law hat if we conceived in sin we should reap the reward; that we should reap the reward; that we told. Throughout the universe we read the evidence of Infinite intelligence and Almighty design; we see them inscribed upon every mountain and embedded in every gale. Every event is foreseen, else God would cease to be infinite. Man has been given the power of choice between good and evil, and hence his responsibility. He can elect whether to plant a thorn or a grapevine, but if he plants the thorn it will not yield grapes. He may prune it and tender the thorn less mischlevons but it will always remain a thorn and an object of distrust. So, too, when a thief is conceived, he must be born a thief. yet in proportion to his intelligence he may ed in ways of honesty, and the dis honest inclination dwarfed, but to be effective this training should begin in infancy, for ex-perience daily proves that "an ounce of pre-vention is worth a pound of cure." Very bad children are sometimes born to good parents, which brings up the question parents, which brings up the question "When a child has been born predisposed to vice and crime, the parents being virtuous and honorable, does it not seem unjust, even cruel that God should have thus cursed the innocent offspring, and then given no sign of token that such is the case until too late for successful discipline?" This query assumes as true something which requires proof. God does give warning of every event, but we heed not. We watch the form and appearance of the clouds and read of a rain storm, a shower or cyclone. In Gen. I., xiv, we read: "And God said let there be lights in the firmaments of heaven to divide the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and for years." These lights are the signs as well as for the seasons, days and years, but it is evident from their having been mentioned first as signs they were of the first importance. That the science of astronomy was known be-

fore the bible was first written is evidenced by the frequent reference thereto, wherein the names of stars and constellations are given. Astrologers are frequently mentioned in the bible. "The wise men of the east" were astrologers. We also find this expression in the bible: "The stars in their course fought against Sisera," that is, the evil configuration of the heavenly bodies was against Sisera. If the bible is the oldest book then astrology is older than the bible. But was nearly lost during the dark ages from having been perverted into a system of divinaion. Frauds, pretending to tell fortunes by the aid of a deck of cards, now call themselves "astrologers," when they know no more of this ancient and sublime science than a donkey does of music. They dress them-selves in some fastidious manner, claim to be "the seventh son of a seventh son," and talk about the "star of destiny," as though our traits of character and events of life are influenced by the stars, when the truth is it is the planets in our solar system and not the stars that are the signs. It is not the heavenly bodies but ante-natal conditions that make us what we are. When a murderer has been conceived God will not interfere to prevent a murderer from being born, because He has given us the ability to prevent the conception of a murderer, and if we err in this particular then we must suffer the resuits. God will write "Murderer" upon the brow of the unborn infant as indellibly as the mark upon Cain, thus giving warning to those who learn to read his handwriting. The same rule will apply to sickness of the body. The celestial signs at birth will indicate the true status of the man, unless after birth he shall be carefully trained in the way he should go. From these considerations it is evident that astrology, if true, is a great necessity to hu-manity, for the moment a child is born all the leading characteristics may be discovered. Then, as habit is a sort of second nature, the child may be trained in a way to dwarf the evil propensities and develop all that is good. The same can be said of the child predisposed by birth to disease. A great many so-called "astrologers" teach that the planets exert an

would reap what we sow. His law is that f we are born in certain signs we will follow the inclinations of our birth if left to ourselves; that the natural condition of our liv were synonymous until the copernican system have at the present time two systems of astrology-one called heliocentric and the other and older system geocentric. By heliocentric we mean that the sun is taken as the center of the zodiac around which we located the planets. By geocentric we mean that the earth is used as a center around which are located the planets and the sun. The signs in the heliocentric system are always stationary, while in the geocentric they are movable. For instance, in the heliocentric plan January is always in the same sign; in the geocentric a person born in January may be born in an entirely different sign. Helio-centrically, all that is required is the day of the year, without longitude or latitude; geo-centrically, we must have the exact hour-and minute of birth, as well as the exact longitude or latitude of the place where birth courred. It will therefore, be reasonable to suppose that the geocentric system is the best, if there is anything in astrology. It is not reasonable to suppose that all persons born the same day throughout the world would have the same traits, which they must have according to heliocentric astrology. In astrology we have to deal with our solar sys-tem, of which the sun is the center, and which is made up of the planets proper, and a belt of small bodies officed planetoids, varying in size and distributed in an orbit about the sun. Besides these, there are numerous satellites belonging to different planets. The planets named, according to their distance from the sun, are: Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune. The ancients invented symbols to distinguish these planets, one from the other, all being a com bination of a circle, cross and cresent. Mer-cury's sign consists of a crescent, a circle and cross; Venus' consists of a circle and cross Earth's a circle with a cross in center; Mars by a cross and circle just opposite of Venus. In order to avoid mistakes of this sign, is used to draw a line from one point of the cross to the other, forming a pyramid at top; Jupiter's is composed of a crescent and Saturn by the cross and crescent franus has two crescents, a cross and a cir cle; Neptune by the crescent and cross. These signs can all be found in any almanac. (This subject will be continued Sunday's edition of The Bee. In the mean time any one who desires to ask any question can have them answered by addressing

letter to "Aster," Bee office, enclosing stamp,

INDIANS MUCH DISSATISFIED.

Claim the Government is Too Slow in Doing as it Agreed. DULUTH, May 18, The present term of the United States court has brought to Duluth half a hundred of Indians from the several reservations in Minnesota, White Earth, Leech Lake and Red Lake. They have determined that no more time should be lost in securing changes in the administra tions of their affairs and have held informal meetings with that object in view. They find all manner of fault with the Indian commissioners. Their case, as stated at their request by W. F. Campbell, one of their number, who belongs on the White Earth reservation, is practically as follows: Much dissatisfaction exists among the Chippewas at present, owing to the loose manner in which the government is carrying out the treaty made with them six years ago, and also from the fact that the government owes them large sums of money under provisions of treaties made long ago, which for some reason they are unable to get. Under the influence over us and cause us to be what we last treaty the cost of making allotments, etc., is borne by the Indians, the government are. If this doctrine be true then neither inheritance, ante-natal conditions, nor training after birth will produce the least impression advancing the money, such money being re-paid out of the common fund of the tribe arising from the sale of lands. Although a in fixing the status of the child. Such a doc-



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captain, "Magic crystal," "magnetic mineral rods," "St. Jacob's rod" and various other CASTLE IN THE CLOUDS Vanderbilt Mansion on a Carolina Mountain. will be according to these signs unless trained in a different line. Astrology and astronomy EXPENDITURE OF was proven, when they became separate. We A Thirty-Thousand Acre Farm Improved at an Expense of \$6,000,000-A Shrewd Darkey Perched in the Middle of the Estate.

> Copyrighted, 1895, by S. S. McClure, Limited) ASHEVILLE, N. C., May 15.-High up among the pine and oak-clad mountain ranges of the Blue Ridge in western North Carolina It is named "Biltmore," and the vast domain of 30,000 acres comprises the "Biltmore es-The owner of this immense estate is George W. Vanderbilt, who has made the place his pride, his hobby and his ambition. It is four or five years since Mr. Vanderbilt's agent began buying tract after tract of wastes and forests in this "Land of the Sky," as the region around Asheville has long been known. Quietly, but quickly this and that farm was bought, and, before the sellers and the natives knew the name of the real pur-chaser, between 6,000 and 7,000 acres had

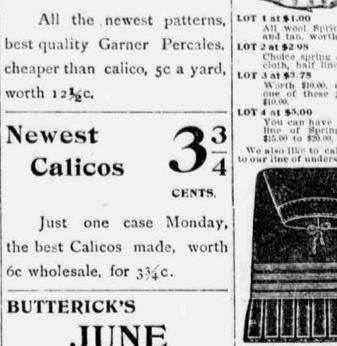
Richard M. Hunt. Then, there have been the forestry operations under the directions of Gifford Pinchot, the brick and tile factory and other industries, which have given employment to more than 100 men.

ALREADY COST \$4,000,000.

It is easy to see how the expenditures have run into the millions. No accurate figures rooms in the house. If you start at one end can be obtained, but it is estimated that the of the building and try to reach the other end Bilimore estate has already cost its owner Hillmore has been going on about four years at a cost of at least \$1,000 a day, or at the

The imposing mansion is rapidly approaching completion, although it will not be ready for occupancy before next year. I was told, though, that Mr. Vanderbilt expected to spend the next Christmas holidays here. score of carvers and stone-cutters are still at work on the outside of the building, while the cabinet makers and interior decorators are beautifying the rooms inside ished and complete.

The house is constructed mainly of In-diana granite, but of course immense quanbeen acquired at reasonable figures. When tities of brick were used and near Biltmore



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Frederick Law Olmstead, who laid out most of Central Park and the grounds of the World's fair at Chicago, and that from 100 to 150 stone cutters, masons and carpenters have been at work raising the stately struchave been at work raising the stately struc-forty feet high. And how much do you think ture according to the plans of the architect, the foundations cost? You might guess three times and then not come within \$100,000 of the real figures. The contract price for the

foundation was let for \$400,000. No such sum of money was ever before expended simply for the foundation of a private house. The state apartments are in the principal front, at each end of which rise the towers five stories high. There are, perhaps, 200 you will get lost. At any rate, that was my

\$4,000,000. It will take, perhaps, \$2,000,000 experience, more to carry out the plans of the landscape It is not easy to describe the principal gardener, of the architect, and of the owner.

As near as can be calculated the work at state. I suppose the great hall or ball room has been going on about four years is one of the finest in the United States. It must be sixty feet high and eighty feet in rate of \$313,000 a year, not counting the length. There are three immense open fire-fifty-two Sundays. decorated while all around the sides are the most elaborate carvings and the finest mar-bles and onyx. An organ costing \$39,999 will

be placed in a suitable place made for it. VAST GARDENS AND NURSERIES. All about the house, in the grounds, there is ample proof of costly and tasteful work, The flower gardens are especially fine. Many of these are sunk below the general level, But with the house finished there will still and, when the sun is out bright and strong, remain much to do to render the place finmany-hued mirrors. The total area covered by the gardens, greenhouses and nurseries cannot be far from seventy-five acres. They are not at all finished, and the owner intends to keep enlarging them as his collec-tion of plants and trees and shrubs grows larger and larger. Already the conservatories

are filled with rare and beautiful plants, including especially rare roses and orchids. The nursery is said to contain more kinds of trees and shrubs than there are in the botanical gardens at Kew, near London, North Carolina is rich in the number of native trees, and the climate is as well suited to the growth of a large variety of trees and shrubs as that of any state in the

In order to have fine gardens and grounds was necessary to have the strongest and best soil. Immense quantities of rich soil were brought from the valleys and river bottoms miles away. Carlead after carlead was dumped on the ground and made into garden spots. One man employed on the estate told me that the amount of dirt brought over the railroad would make another THE STABLES. ROADS AND FORESTS.

The stables are now about finished and are as fine as any in the country. Mr. Vanderbilt if fond of blooded stock and no doubt the stalls and barns will delight the lover of long pedigrees and blue blood. Then, there are the deer park of 3,00e acres and the well stocked trout streams. The forest will afford shelter for game and the partridge shooting, now good, will be better as the years go by. A little old house that is of almost as much interest to visitors as the big mansion itself is "the house that Vanderbilt can't buy."
Yes; that's a fact. Right in the midst of the
30,000 acre estate is a rude cabin and nine acres of land. It is, perhaps, less than one mile from the mansion and on one of the main roads to the place.

main roads to the place.

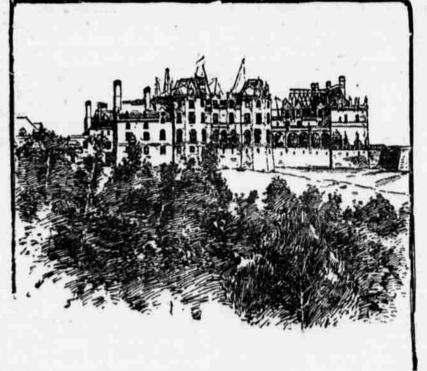
The owner of the property has obstinately refused to sell to Vanderbilt. What makes the matter worse he is a colored person. I call him Vanderbilt's bete noir. It is said is no way of shutting him in, as he has the right of way over the road.

On my way back I stopped to see this in-dependent colored man. As I drew up to the small white house at the end of the road and called out a black woman appeared in the doorway, while two active pickanninies bobbed up from behind. "Does 'Josh' Moore live here?" I inquired.

"Yes, sah," she replied, and in reponse to another question she went to the rear of the house and in a short time "Josh" appeared. We soon fell into conversation and found him friendly and ready to talk. When I said to him, "Of course Mr. Van-derbilt objects to you as a neighbor," he replied with a broad grin, "Well, I don't

ject to Mistah Vanderbilt as a naybor."
"Why don't you sell?" I inquired.

"I reckon I'ae will, sah, wen I git mah price, sah!" At just what price he would sell



THE VANDERBILT MANSION.

viously went begging for a few dollars an acre jumped up to \$250, and some of it could not be bought for \$500 an acre. IMPROVEMENTS VAST AS THE ESTATE.

The mountain site and thousands of acres having been acquired, the most elaborate plans and preparations were made for the transformation of the rough and ragged hills into a scene of great grandeur and beauty, and for the building of one of the most splendid and sumptuous piles of architecture to be found anywhere in the United States. The work of improving and beautifying the estate was put into the hands of the most competent and experienced men. The architect, the landscape gardener, and the forrester were particularly given "free swing" to carry out their ideas and plans on a larger scale than ever before attempted in this country.

Some idea of the extent of these operations may be had from the fact that, during the past three years, 200 men have been steadily engaged in bringing the grounds to the per-fection exacted by the landscape gardener,

Mr. Vanderbilt's name became associated, station brick works were established. There with the purchases the prices advanced at least 100 per cent. Mountain land that pre- able for first-class brick and tile. These will be used mostly for the surrounding call him Vanderbilt's bete noir. It is said buildings, stables, etc. Three brick and that the old darky has been offered as high tile kilns were erected, each with a capacity of 50,000 a day. The brick machines turned out bricks at the rate of 60,000 a day. Besides these, about 2,000 or 3,000 flower pots were made a day, as the manufactory made more than was used, the surplus was sold to outside parties. When the writer visited the place, the works were running on half time, and few men were

> A SPECIAL RAILROAD TO THE PLACE. To carry the material for the different buildings a railroad from Biltmore station to the site of the mansion, a distance of three miles, was built. This cost about \$50,000. The workmen went back and forth every day on the cars. When the buildings are completed, the railroad will be torn up. the track and bridges removed and the

grounds put in proper order.

The foundations of Biltmore were laid broad and deep. This was particularly neces-